

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-15

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P R 191519Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8307
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY KABUL

S E C R E T LONDON 11451

FROM NEWSOM

E. O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: PEPR AF IN IR
SUBJECT: IMPRESSIONS OF AFGHANISTAN

1. I PROMISED TO PROVIDE TO CHARGE NAAS IN TEHRAN
AND AMBASSADOR GOHEEN IN DELHI MY IMPRESSIONS OF THE
SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN FOR THEM TO PASS ON TO THEIR
RESPECTIVE HOST GOVERNMENTS. SUBJECT TO DEPARTMENT'S
CLEARANCE, I PROPOSE THEY MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. IN HIS VISIT TO KABUL JULY 14 UNDERSECRETARY
NEWSOM MET WITH CHAIRMATARAKI AND FOREIGN MINISTER
AMIN AND OTHER AFGHAN OFFICIALS. THEY EXPRESSED THEIR
DESIRE FOR FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES
AND EMPHASIZED THEIR POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT. THEY
SAID THAT THEY WERE REVIEWING VARIOUS ISSUES SUCH AS
THE FRONTIERS WITH PAKISTAN AND THE WATER AGREEMENT
WITH IRAN AND HAD NOT YET DETERMINED THEIR POLICIES.
THEY STATED THAT WHATEVER THEIR DECISIONS, THEY HOPED
TO RESOLVE ISSUES WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS THROUGH
NEGOTIATIONS.

B. ON INTERNAL MATTERS, THEY SAID THEY WOULD BE
DRAWING UP A FIVE YEAR PLAN AND THAT THEIR FIRST
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PRIORITY WOULD BE LAND REFORM. THEY SAID THEY
FAVORED COOPERATIVES OVER COLLECTIVES.

C. WHILE THERE IS A GENERAL IMPRESSION AROUND
WESTERN EMBASSIES IN KABUL THAT THE NUMBER OF SOVIET
ADVISORS IS INCREASING, THIS WAS NOT MENTIONED BY
AFGHAN OFFICIALS, ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT TARAHI POINTED
OUT THAT AFGHANISTAN HAD HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE

SOVIET UNION FOR SIXTY YEARS AND LOOKED FORWARD TO
SUBSTANTIAL HELP FROM THE SOVIET UNION. THEY HOPED
TO GET SUBSTANTIAL HELP FROM OTHERS AS WELL.

D. MR. NEWSOM DOES NOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY
THAT SOVIET INFLUENCE MAY INCREASE BUT BELIEVES THE
UNITED STATES SHOULD RESPOND TO THE OVERTURES FROM THE
NEW GOVERNMENT FOR FRIENDLY RELATIONS AND ASSISTANCE.
HE HAS, ACCORDINGLY, RECOMMENDED THAT THE UNITED STATES
CONTINUE ITS PRESENT PROJECTS AND UNDERTAKE ONE NEW
PROJECT VALUED AT \$3.8 MILLION IN THE HELMAND VALLEY.

E. MR. NEWSOM, AT THE SAME TIME, HAS SUGGESTED
THE UNITED STATES SHOULD REVIEW THE SITUATION IF ITS
PROGRAMS AND PERSONNEL ARE NOT GIVEN TREATMENT AND
ACCESS COMPARABLE TO THOSE OF OTHER DONORS, IF THE
AFGHAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTS FROM GENUINE NON-ALIGNMENT
OR UNDERTAKES POLICIES WHICH CREATED PROBLEMS ON THE
FRONTIERS OF PAKISTAN.

BREWSTER

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